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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 000189

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [OA](#) [LE](#) [AE](#)

SUBJECT: UNIFIL LOBBYING FOR ARAB SUPPORT

REF: STATE 12556

Classified by CDA Martin Quinn, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) The Charge pressed UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mohammed Hussain al-Sha'ali February 10 on the need for a continued Arab presence in UNIFIL, a prospect complicated by the impending withdrawal of Qatari forces. Asked to consider a UAE contribution, al-Sha'ali said frankly, "maybe somewhere else...but Lebanon?" He nonetheless promised to raise the question with Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed.

¶2. (C) Comment: The UAE has been very engaged in the Lebanon situation on many fronts, including frequent political efforts (often through the Arab League), humanitarian donations, and security assistance. A long-standing mine-removal project in southern Lebanon is another UAE contribution with a military angle. Sending troops there, however, is likely a bridge too far. We therefore added a push for them to urge other Arabs to participate. End comment.

QUINN